

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Personnel

SUBJECT : Counseling

REFERENCE : Memo dtd 19 Sep 63 fr C/Outplacement Service; Subj:
"Outplacement Program Recommendations"

1. In response to your request, this reports on our review of the counseling activities of the Office of Personnel. In the course of the survey, we have reviewed pertinent correspondence and records and have talked with the Chiefs, POD, SAS, CSPD, and BSD and with most of their subordinate personnel officers who represent the Office of Personnel in face-to-face interviews with Agency employees. Our initial purpose was to assemble complete and detailed information on all types of these interviewing activities which, taken together, constitute a major segment of the professional work of the Office of Personnel. We also planned to use this background in analyzing and appraising the referenced proposal.

2. Although we have not completed the survey in the detail originally planned, we have concluded that it would be impractical to pursue it further at this time. We are convinced that current limitations on space and personnel are overriding and would preclude such action as we might otherwise recommend for the relocation and improvement of counseling facilities. It is enough to say that we have found many of the physical arrangements for counseling to be most inadequate and we recommend that they be improved as soon as adequate space can be made available. Specific recommendations along these lines would necessarily depend upon the particular space arrangements which could be made.

3. It was not surprising to find that this Agency faces the same basic problems which are inherent in the management of most counseling activities. It is typical that the personnel officers who engage in discussions with Agency employees cover a wide variety of subjects even though their particular duty assignments might suggest that their individual competence would relate to special areas of information. There is no assurance that the employee who presents himself for help will tolerate a restricted definition of his problem in conformance with predetermined organizational lines or that the course of a particular interview will not shift properly from one subject area to another. For example, an "indebtedness" interview may lead into a discussion of marital problems and an "out-placement" interview may develop into a discussion of employee-supervisory relationships. The principal difficulty arises from the conflict between the need on the one hand to organize interview services, at least in part, according to substantive categories of information and, on the other hand, to provide sufficient counseling talent at each of the places where such services are offered. It is seldom possible to completely resolve the conflict between these two objectives and some compromise is usually necessary in both directions.

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4. It is pertinent to note that although this Agency has more than the ordinary interest in the general conduct and well-being of its employees, they are probably less comfortable in admitting personal difficulties and seeking help than are employees of most other Federal agencies. Generally, those of our employees who seek assistance from representatives of the Office of Personnel will have explored and exhausted their personal resources for meeting their problems. Therefore, it is especially important to give prompt, courteous and competent attention to any employee who is motivated to seek help. The problem is complicated further because there is no way to know in advance which of the employees who seek information will prove to need counseling as well.

5. It is also significant that the ability to counsel effectively is a special talent which is not shared equally among personnel officers. Economical use of this asset requires that the places where it is available be made known generally and that those officers who have the skill to counsel be shielded, insofar as possible, from demands which would divert their energies into less productive channels. It is not necessary for a counselor, as such, to be expert on information in any given field. His primary job is to respond to the expressed feelings of the employee concerned so as to assist him in recognizing and accepting the emotions which influence his attitudes and behavior. In most cases which call for counseling, the employee will either have the necessary information or will know where to get it once he has decided upon a course of action. For example, problems which bring employees to seek help from the Outplacement Service often involve a need to resolve their doubts as to whether they will actively seek a change in their work. The decision, in most cases, depends upon adjustments among more or less complex emotional factors rather than upon any cold analysis of facts concerning the market for the individual's real abilities. The process of counseling and the processes of providing information, pre-planning reassignments and arranging placements outside the Agency are quite separate and distinct.

6. The current interviewing functions and related "counseling" activities of the Office of Personnel fall into five discrete categories which require separate handling even though they may be grouped in a variety of combinations for ease of administration. These are the separate areas of responsibility for:

a. Official activities concerned with the employment of employees and ex-employees outside the Agency. (This responsibility is being handled currently by the Outplacement Service/POD. From time-to-time, the Benefits and Counseling Branch/BSO also assists employees who are leaving the Agency in preparing resumes of their Agency employment.)

b. Handling employee "entitlements" such as retirement, BEC, and MIA. (This responsibility is carried in BCB/BSO and in the Office of the Chief, BSO.)

c. Contacts with employees on matters involving the management of their Agency employment. (Responsibilities in this area are being handled by CSPO, by the Placement Branch/POD, by the Outplacement Service/POD and by BCB/BSO.)

d. Administering the various "welfare" activities sponsored by the Agency such as the PSAS. (This area of responsibility is covered by BCB/BSD).

e. Handling necessary administrative support to activities sponsored by employee organizations such as the Credit Union, GEHA, and the recreation association. (These responsibilities are handled by the Insurance Branch/BSD, BCB/BSD and by the office of the Chief, BSD).

7. Generally, our observations confirm the evolution and current role of the Outplacement Service as described in the referenced memorandum. However, we do not agree completely either with the analysis of current administrative problems in the counseling area or with the specific recommendations for corrective action which are contained in that memorandum. The following are the essential elements of the problem as we see it:

a. There is a well established need for a unit within the Office of Personnel to coordinate and handle the various activities connected with the Agency's interest in the movement of personnel to employment in other organizations and in such interest as the Agency may have in the outside employment activities of ex-employees. Questions have been raised as to where such a unit should be placed organizationally and whether responsibilities for this function should be combined with those for other activities.

b. Out-placement activities must be conducted in close harmony with other actions concerning the affected employees. Currently, this involves the need for the Out-placement Service to maintain close coordination with SAS and with BSD in connection with retirement cases. Since prospective retirees will probably represent a large group of employees with out-placement interests, the possible desirability of merging responsibility for the outplacement and retirement functions deserves consideration.

c. The Office of Personnel is seeking to improve its capacity to provide staff leadership and assistance to the several career services in connection with their responsibilities for career management and development. Quite apart from this, there is also a need to clarify the responsibilities and relationships among those units in the Office of Personnel which deal with Agency employees who seek or are referred for assistance on matters concerning their Agency careers.

8. The following are our conclusions with respect to the specific proposals in the referenced memorandum.

a. We agree that the Office of Personnel should improve its capacity to deal with placement and career development problems which cross career service lines and that the Outplacement Service is partially filling this need. We believe, however, that this ought to be considered a temporary arrangement until this function can be performed effectively by a more appropriate unit within the Office of Personnel. In spite of their common labels, the internal and external

"placement" activities of the Office of Personnel are essentially different and should be handled separately. Ideally, the unit which handles individual internal placement problems at the Agency level should be astride of all internal placement activities conducted by members of the Office of Personnel.

b. We do not agree that the functions of the Executive Secretary of the CIA Retirement Board should be merged with the outplacement function at this time. Those who are responsible for retirement counseling in the Benefits and Services Division should refer employees for assistance by the Out-placement Service when the need for such help is indicated. It is possible that the volume of prospective retirees who need outplacement assistance may increase under the new CIA retirement system to a point where such a merger would merit reconsideration at some future date.

c. As we see it, the outplacement unit should direct its energy toward locating and arranging outside employment for those employees whose departure is of some positive interest to Agency management. This unit should also handle all inquiries from outside employers concerning ex-employees. So defined, it is of no great importance where the out-placement function is located within the Office of Personnel. For example, it might be added to the many responsibilities of BSD on grounds that it is a "service"; or, possibly with equal justification, it could be added to the responsibilities of PRD because of its similar need to be oriented toward outside resources. In any event, we see no compelling reason to add the outplacement function to the direct supervisory responsibilities of the Director of Personnel or, for that matter, to move it at all.

d. For the long run, we cannot endorse the continued performance of internal placement functions by the Outplacement Service. We cannot agree that the current mixture of functions performed by the Outplacement Service should be institutionalized by creating the proposed "CIA Career Counseling Service". Instead, we believe that action is called for to thrust responsibilities for internal placement on the career services and those elements of the Office of Personnel which are charged with responsibilities for the internal management of Agency employees.

9. In order to verify whether our conclusions were responsive to the realities of this situation, we invited the interested OP/Division and Staff Chiefs to comment on a draft of this paper as written above. We have modified the following recommendations to accommodate the substance of their comments which were in general agreement with our observations and findings although recognizing that human factors not covered in this paper might influence these matters. While all agreed that the Outplacement Service should not be moved organizationally or merged with the retirement function, the Chiefs of BSD and CSPD both stressed the need to reconsider the desirability of merging responsibilities for outplacement and retirement activities when the new CIA Retirement System is established. Chief BSD also expressed the strong belief that a survey of Agency-wide counseling

activities should be continued in spite of current personnel and space limitations in order to develop specific program recommendations for review by the Director of Personnel.


10. Recognizing that the Outplacement Service probably cannot avoid becoming involved in some matters concerned with internal management, we recommend that:

a. the Outplacement Service remain in POD, for the present, and that its charter and efforts be directed toward placement in jobs outside the Agency. This unit should also be responsible for handling all employment inquiries concerning ex-employees.

b. that Chiefs POD and CSPD collaborate to explore methods of assisting the Placement Branch in improving its effective participation in the substance of Intra-Agency assignment activities.

c. that the Plans and Review Staff work with BSD, POD, and other interested elements of the Office of Personnel to assess counseling needs from an overall Agency viewpoint with the aim of identifying and clarifying policy differences and of developing recommendations as to basic program objectives in this area. (We would expect to consider related matters involving the organization and management of resources of the Office of Personnel only upon your specific request.)

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Chief, Plans and Review Staff

The recommendation in Paragraph 10 is approved

Director of Personnel

Date

☐ UNCLASSIFIED

☐ INTERNAL
USF NLY

☐ CONFIDENTIAL

☒ SECRET

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

FROM: Chief, Plans & Review Staff
2726 Qts. Eye

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

6 March 1964

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TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S
INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1. Director of Personnel
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*I will have some oral
amendments to this at
our next afternoon
meeting. WTS*

*Redefine position
of Col placement.
Make certain does
not impinge on
Placement*

Office of Dir Personnel } are additional & major points
Special Activities Staff } of employee counseling &
assistance

PSAS & Welfare assistance are significantly managed by
Dir Per, Dep Dir & Exec Asst.